



### From the Director of Victim Services

Grieving during the holidays is difficult. Especially the first holiday cycle after the passing of a loved one. Whatever your age, whatever the cause of death, holidays lived in the absence of a loved one can be a very difficult time. Customary routines are ended, never to be repeated in quite the same way. Easy-going laughter, once flowing so naturally, may become awkward or even altogether missing. Gift-giving, once so filled with fun, may seem

somehow empty and sad. Familiar songs, once so comforting, may catch in your throat or bring tears to your eyes.

The best way to approach a holiday is to find ways to make it personally meaningful while acknowledging events, feelings, and circumstances. Thinking beforehand about what may be helpful to make the holidays easier and better and what might make them harder, can be beneficial. Here are a few tips that may help survivors and their support system.

- Choose to celebrate or not.
- Spend time with those who are helpful, supportive, understanding, patient, and caring.

Consider starting a new tradition or activity that is comfortable and enjoyable. Celebrate in ways that are meaningful and helpful. Maintain existing family traditions only where desired.

*Tamika Dobbins*

December 2019

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#### Victim Services Mission

*To support victims, their families, and the laws that protect their rights, while utilizing recognized principles of offender behavioral change to help reduce the risk of repeat criminal behavior.*

#### Victim Services Provides:

- Information regarding the status of offenders in prison with felony convictions
- Registration for victim notification
- Assistance with threats, unwanted calls/correspondence from an offender

#### Victim Services Activities:

- Community education programs
- Coordination with the Board of Parole, Attorney General's Office, and the Tennessee District Attorney General's Office to respond to victims' concerns
- Education to TDOC staff to increase awareness of victims' issues
- Collaboration with other victim advocates

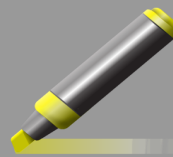
## 17th Annual Tennessee Season to Remember

For the 17th consecutive year on December 5, 2019, families of homicide victims honored their lost loved ones during the annual “Tennessee Season to Remember”. Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee hosted at First Baptist Church in Nashville. Several state and federal agencies as well as victim advocacy organizations worked together on this year’s event. Mychal Austin, son of slain Tennessee Department of Correction Correctional Administrator Debra Johnson was the keynote speaker and music was provided by Dr. San Franklin, Senior Pastor at Kingdom Love Worship Center in Madison TN.

Below are a few highlights from the 2019 17th annual Tennessee Season to Remember event held in Nashville.



# Victims Services Highlights.....

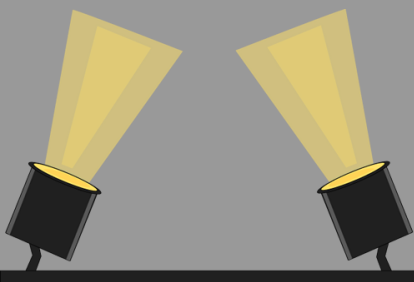


**Kendra Bonetti**, originally from Portland, Ore., came to Nashville, Tenn., with over 16 years of experience working with victims of violent crime. Prior to being hired in June 2019 by the Tennessee District Attorney Generals Conference (TNDAGC) as the victim services training coordinator, Kendra worked as a sexual assault victim advocate volunteer coordinator, sexual assault kit initiative advocate, 24-hour on-call DV/SA advocate, homicide victim advocate and human trafficking victim advocate for the Multnomah County District Attorney's office.

Kendra has extensive training in victimology, using a victim-centered approach and being trauma-informed while working with victims of violent crime. Her expertise has been crucial for training system-based advocates, non-system-based advocates, law enforcement, SANE nurses, attorneys and judges on victim issues. Kendra's philosophy is to first, do no harm, second, treat each victim with dignity and respect ensuring that victims are heard, informed and present throughout the criminal justice process.

During her six months with the TNDAGC, Kendra has become acquainted with the victim witness coordinators across the state and learned the ins and outs of Tennessee's victim rights laws. Currently, she is working with Tennessee Voices for Victims to establish Mass Violence Incident Teams across the state. Moving into 2020 and beyond, Kendra will be working to enhance collaboration and communication between victim advocacy organizations, victim service providers, and victim-witness coordinators.

Kendra received a degree in psychology and forensic science from Western Oregon University in 2004, graduating with honors. In her free time, she enjoys music, concerts and dancing. Kendra also loves to travel and spend time with her family, especially her grandson.



# National Impaired Driving Prevention Month

For the 39th consecutive year, December is being recognized as National Impaired Driving Prevention Month. Two of the most celebrated dates in December, Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, are also among the most dangerous. In 2018, drunk driving crashes claimed 108 lives in those two days alone, accounting for nearly half of total traffic deaths. Organizations such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), is teaming up with law enforcement agencies across the country throughout the month of December.

During December 2018, 839 people died in alcohol-related crashes, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. While drunk driving deaths typically represent around a third of all traffic fatalities, that increased to nearly 50 percent on December 24 and December 31. The pain caused by one person's choice to drive impaired is often permanent. Every single death left a permanent empty seat at the table and turned a time of celebration into tragedy.

Drunk driving crashes increase throughout the month of December as people travel and attend events where alcohol is served. Everyone can take personal responsibility this holiday season by making a plan for a safe ride home before celebrations begin. You can take a taxi, bus, or train; use a rideshare app such as Uber or Lyft.



## TDOC Central Office Monthly Stats

Telephone Calls	November
Phone calls Received/Returned	125
Parties Registered for Notifications	143
Harassment/Threats/No Contact	9
Referrals	19
Release/Parole Inquiry	26
Other	72

Notifications	November
Registration	202
Movement	176
Advance Release	292
Final Release *	99
Death	13
Other	77



# Announcements



Join us for the 7th annual Wine Women & Shoes on Saturday, February 23 from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Music City Center. The fashion-forward event includes fine wine tastings, culinary treats, auctions, a walk-around boutique marketplace, and a special musical performance. WW&S is a fun way to raise awareness, funds, and friends for the YWCA's Weaver Domestic Violence Center. The Weaver Center is the largest emergency shelter in the state of Tennessee, providing nearly 17,000 bed nights of safety per year.

For sponsorship information contact Rachel Sigler 615-983-5162  
[rachel.sigler@ywcanashville.com](mailto:rachel.sigler@ywcanashville.com)

For registration information contact Cathy Kaiser 615-983-5146  
[cathy.kaiser@ywcanashville](mailto:cathy.kaiser@ywcanashville)

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Tennessee Department of Correction

Victim Services

5th Floor Rachel Jackson Building

320 6th Avenue North

Nashville, TN 37243

615-253-8145 ph

[Victim.Notification@tn.gov](mailto:Victim.Notification@tn.gov)